

REMARKS

Claims 1, 3-19, and 21-35 are pending in the application. Claim 1 has been amended, and claims 2 and 20 were previously canceled. Claims 28-35 are new.

In the Office Action mailed August 24, 2005, claims 8-19 and 21-27 were allowed. Claims 6 and 7 were found to be allowable. Claims 1 and 3-5 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by Sidner et al. (of record). Remarks accompanying the rejection state that Sidner et al. disclose a semiconductor structure useful as a pressure sensor where in Figure 2G a buried cavity is completely surrounded by monocrystalline semiconductor structure 12. The remarks further state that layer 24 in Figure 2F is an "epitaxial inhibiting material which is disclosed to be one of oxide, nitride or TEOS."

Applicants respectfully disagree with the basis for the rejection and request reconsideration and further examination of the claims.

In a telephone conference with the Examiner on Thursday, November 10, 2005, applicants' undersigned representative proposed an amendment to claim 1 in which the cavity wall is recited as being "coated" with a layer of material inhibiting epitaxial growth. This amendment would distinguish the present invention over Sidner et al. in which, in Figures 2F-2G a buried cavity is disclosed that does not have any inhibiting epitaxial growth on its wall. Sidner et al. specifically teach that the buried cavity 16 has walls that are not coated. In Figure 2F, the layer 24 is a masking layer on the surface of the substrate that in no way touches the walls of the cavity 16.

In contrast, claim 1 recites a wafer of monocrystalline semiconductor material comprising at least one buried cavity having a wall completely surrounded by the monocrystalline material, the cavity wall coated with a layer of material inhibiting epitaxial growth. As discussed with the Examiner, this claimed combination distinguishes over the teachings of Sidner et al. and is allowable.

Claims 3-5, which depend from claim 1, are allowable for the features recited therein as well as for the reasons why claim 1 is allowable.

Claims 6 and 7 are also allowable for the features recited therein, as recognized by the Examiner, in addition to the reasons why claim 1 is allowable.

New independent claims 28 and 32 are dependent claims 6 and 7 rewritten into independent form to include independent claim 1. Applicants respectfully submit that new claims 28 and 32, as well as all claims depending therefrom, are clearly in condition for allowance.

In view of the foregoing, applicants respectfully submit all of the claims in this application are now clearly in condition for allowance. In the event the Examiner finds minor informalities that can be resolved by telephone conference, the Examiner is urged to contact applicants' undersigned representative by telephone at (206) 622-4900 in order to expeditiously resolve prosecution of this application. Consequently, early and favorable action allowing these claims and passing this case to issuance is respectfully solicited.

The Director is authorized to charge any additional fees due by way of this Amendment, or credit any overpayment, to our Deposit Account No. 19-1090.

All of the claims remaining in the application are now clearly allowable. Favorable consideration and a Notice of Allowance are earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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